Virginia Foster Durr
364 1/2 Water Street
Hallowell, Maine
04347
207-626-3594

Subject: Virginia F. Durr's 90th Birthday & Respectful Protest of The Clifford J. Durr Memorial Lecture Series

Today, August 7, 1993 celebrates my mother Virginia Foster Durr's 90th birthday. Hundreds of friends, relatives, scholars, historians, journalists, writers and celebrities have gathered far and wide in Martha's Vinyard to attend this event and to champion a Southern Alabama woman who has become for many a symbol of courage and social justice. My mother is well known for the significant role she played in the abolishment of the poll tax (which in effect deprived women and blacks equal opportunity to vote) and for her highly visible participation in the civil rights movement of the late fifties and sixties.

Today's celebration also will serve as a fund raising event for the Clifford J. Durr Memorial Lecture series on the Constitutional Protection of Civil Liberties. Requested donations, to replace birthday gifts, have been designated for the purpose of an endowment to pay expenses and speaker's fees for "nationally prominent speakers" invited each spring to Auburn University in Montgomery Alabama "to address aspects of the constitutional protection of civil liberties, especially those enunciated in the first amendment."

My father strongly and eloquently encouraged Americans to use their rights of dissent when he said: **"The danger to our liberties lies not in evil men for they are few; rather it lies with normally decent men (and women) who are silent when they ought to say, "These things which are being done are wrong and I will stand against them."**

It is in this spirit that I, daughter of Clifford and Virginia Durr am making my own dissent, protesting the use of my fathers name for the purpose of providing the "nationally prominent" yet another forum to be honored and honor themselves.

It is my understanding, garnered from many long conversations with my father while he was alive, that the purpose of democracy and its accompanying guarantees is to keep alive the ideas and hope that the disempowered can, through the use of free speech within the political process, engage in civil dialogue with those in power with some realistic possibility of non-violent change and thus redress the terrible imbalance between the haves and the have nots within our human family.

I have expressed my viewpoint repeatedly to my family, to potential speakers, to the Chancellor of Auburn University and to the Committee in charge of the Clifford J. Durr Memorial Lecture series. They have chosen either not to respond or to thoroughly disagree. I have chosen to keep up the good fight with respectful protest.

Virginia Foster Durr, The 2nd (a.k.a.) Tilla
Virginia Foster Durr, 2nd (a.k.a. Tilla)

Release date: August 7, 1993